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# Street work fee to rise under plan

## High construction costs leading to higher TARF

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

The city of Neenah is considering doubling its Transportation Assessment Replacement Fee (TARF) that is billed to property owners and businesses as a replacement for special assessments for street resurfacing, reconstruction and sidewalk construction projects.

Although the council hasn't voted on

the final numbers, the annual TARF is expected to increase from \$23 to \$48 per impervious area unit (IAU). The IAU is a measure of the impervious area on a property's hard surfaces such as rooftops, driveways and parking lots, and is the basis of the stormwater utility charge.

According to the League of Women Voters, impervious area can be viewed as an indication of the level of development on a property and more broadly viewed as an indicator of the impact of a property on the transportation system. The city ordinance notes there is a correlation between

the amount of impervious surface on a property parcel and the traffic generated from that parcel.

While some communities such as Appleton use a charge against a registered vehicle called a wheel tax to generate revenue to help cover the cost of road projects, Neenah implemented a TARF in 2019 because the mayor and council considered it a more equitable approach.

Previously, homeowners could be billed thousands for special assessments. The

SEE **Roadwork fee** ON PAGE 9



Neenah News

## Bringing it home

Neenah High School's homecoming parade marchers, which included the school band shown here, and residents braved wet and windy weather last Friday for the festivities downtown ahead of the Rockets home football victory against Fond du Lac. Neenah is at Oshkosh North tonight for its regular-season finale. See a preview of the matchup on Page 10.

# Suspect in carjacking of Neenah woman, child in court

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

The man who allegedly kidnapped, robbed and carjacked a 31-year-old Neenah woman last week has been identified as 51-year-old Jay Scott.

Scott was in court Wednesday for a preliminary hearing on felony charges of carjacking while possessing a weapon, kidnapping, forceful abduction of a child, armed robbery, bail jumping and theft of movable property.

According to the criminal complaint, the victim and her 4-year-old son were parked Oct. 2 by the north entrance of

the Fox River Mall and were returning to the car around 7:30 p.m. after shopping at Macy's.

As the victim was helping her son get into the car, Scott rode by on a bicycle and looped back around. When the victim turned around, Scott was standing near her holding a knife and told her to get into the car. Scott allegedly told the victim, "I'm not going to hurt you, just get in the car."



Scott

Scott took her keys and drove the woman's vehicle with her and her child inside. Documents say Scott first drove her to Nicolet Bank in Neenah but she told him she banks at Wells Fargo. He then drove her to Wells Fargo on South Green Bay Road but she was unable to use the ATM because he parked too close.

When Scott pulled up to a red traffic light, the woman opened the door and jumped out of the car with her son. She immediately began yelling for help and a motorist allowed the woman and child to enter her vehicle and drove them to the Kohl's parking lot, where they waited for

police. The victim and her child were treated at a local hospital for non-life-threatening injuries.

Neenah police quickly relayed the license plate to neighboring agencies. Officials said through a coordinated effort with Winnebago police, Omro police and the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office, the vehicle was located in the Town of Rushford and Scott was taken into custody without incident.

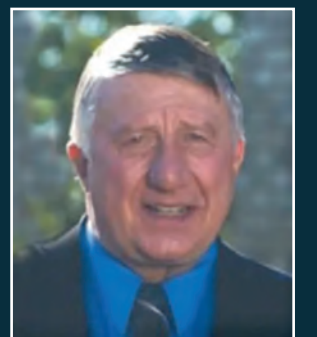
Found in Scott's possession was \$1,844 cash and a check for just under \$900 in the victim's name. He is in the Outagamie County Jail on a \$500,000 cash bond.

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It is the policy of Neenah News to correct all errors of fact. For correction information call 920-385-4512.

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# Device adds to cargo driving alerts

Neenah News

J. J. Keller & Associates has been granted a patent on its latest technology to keep cargo drivers connected with the transportation companies they serve when their logging devices fail or are disconnected.

Titled the Driving Monitoring and Detection System, the intellectual property was filed with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office by the Neenah-based safety and compliance solutions provider to the transportation industry in October 2020 and granted Sept. 26.

Frances Crowley Yuronich, associate director of technology solutions at J. J. Keller, said this is the 19th patent for its electronic logging devices (ELDs) that are certified by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration as an approved provider.

“It’s available to customers already, and any customers who have our ELDs would have this feature enabled,” Yuronich said.

“It’s notifying the driver when one of these situations occurs so that the driver can take action right away; he can pull over, he can get connected to his device and he can move on. It also notifies the back office – Encompass – so that the administrator, or the user, can contact that driver.”

The company’s Encompass application, available on Android and iOS platforms, incorporates the driving monitoring and detection system that uses the GPS module to detect motion when the ELD is disconnected. If the device moves beyond set distance and time thresholds, it triggers a prompt for the user to reconnect the ELD to the Encompass application.

Information is relayed to the administrative side of the Encompass platform, providing fleet managers with details on when and how long the application was in motion while disconnected. The company said it will assist a carrier’s support team in identifying and communicating with driv-



Photo from J. J. Keller

A driver for J. J. Keller works with the company’s Encompass application used with electronic logging devices.

ers not in compliance with regulations.

“Anytime you can make changes to your system to make the customer’s life easier, to ensure drivers are taking the right steps to stay in compliance, you’re going to have a positive outcome,” Yuronich said.

“Drivers want to do a good job,” she said. “Giving that driver the opportunity to take corrective action is actually better for everybody. Not having the driver connected could be a compliance issue.”

Yuronich said it creates a significant administrative burden when these situations happen that need to be reconciled by drivers who must recertify their driving logs as well as having them updated at the office.

“There are all these extra steps that are added to the process when it gets missed. This is not value-added work; this is the work they have to do to stay in compliance,” she said, “so any time you can get rid of some of these extra steps ... is a win.”

The patent approval, which gives J. J.

Keller exclusive rights to make, sell or license the invention, was praised by the development team.

“I am profoundly honored to have contributed to the development of this invention – a tool that will enable motor carriers to adhere to essential regulations, consequently establishing safer highways for everyone on the road,” said Roman Bykhovoy, a senior developer with J. J. Keller and an inventor of the monitoring and detection system.

## Froedtert acquiring Ascension interest in Network Health

Neenah News

Froedtert Health will purchase Ascension Wisconsin’s interest in Network Health, which provides commercial and Medicare health insurance plans, under an agreement announced last week.

Each organization currently has a 50% interest in Network Health. The state-based insurer offers plans for employers, individuals and families in 23 counties, including Winnebago, and had been co-owned by Froedtert and Ascension.

“The opportunity to acquire 100% ownership of Network Health is consistent with our mission to advance the health of the people of the diverse communities we serve through exceptional care enhanced by innovation and discovery,” said Cathy Jacobson, Froedtert Health chief executive. “As a proven health insurance plan that consistently receives top ratings from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, we’re confident this investment will complement our robust population health strategy, allowing us to care for more people at the right place and at the right time.”

Network Health members are not expected to experience any service disruption resulting from the acquisition. Ascension Wisconsin will extend its provider agreement to stay in network for Network Health members.

A closing date will be set after regulatory review and approval.

## Correction

**OCT. 6, PAGE 2:** A historical photo of Neenah High School’s homecoming queen and court was of the 1955 court, not 1954. Members of the court surrounded by cheerleaders were senior Judy Page as queen, along with Judy Thorson, Ellen O’Leary and Sharon Johnson.

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# City annexing 28 acres for housing plans in Vinland

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

The city of Neenah is annexing 28.6 acres of land in the Town of Vinland and moving forward on preliminary plats for housing development additions to the Homes at Freedom Meadows and Freedom Acres subdivisions.

The annexation parcel will become the first addition of the Freedom Acres subdivi-



Neenah News

The new Vinnie's Pantry is nearing completion with a grand opening set for Oct. 26.

## New food pantry prepares to meet higher demand

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

Construction on the newly named Vinnie's Pantry is nearing completion with a grand opening and ribbon cutting set for 1:30 p.m. Oct. 26.

The food pantry is open to residents of Neenah and Menasha and is moving from its existing location inside the St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP) thrift store's retail space to a 27,000-square-foot space next door at 1421 S. Commercial St.

Although the food pantry has been informally called Vinnie's Pantry, the new location will make it official in an effort to be inclusive to all denominations. A Vinnie's Pantry sign was recently installed outside.

SVDP director of operations Jeremy Pingel said all significant construction at the new location is completed. The walk-in cooler and freezer are installed, and operational and floor prep work is expected to be completed next week. After that, shelves will be installed while staff and volunteers work on organizing.

"It's all the little detail stuff," he said.

The food pantry was operated by St. Mary & St. John Parishes out of a church closet in Menasha for about 15 years. In February 2021, the location expanded into a full food pantry using a portion of the thrift store's retail space.

On average, the pantry supplies 45,000 to 50,000 pounds of food per month to residents of northern Winnebago County. Since early 2021, the location has distributed a total of more than 1 million pounds of food to residents. With growing food insecurity in the community, the pantry quickly outgrew the shared space.

SVDP spent more than \$700,000 on procuring and remodeling the new food pantry location, which involved demolition work on walls, floor work, painting, installing coolers, freezers and shelving.

Pingel said in advance of the grand opening, Vinnie's needs monetary donations and donations of food and personal hygiene items.

"We're really excited and always looking for volunteers," he said.

vision with about 48 single-family lots to be developed. It is part of the Armstrong family farm development by Van Sistine Homes.

The 130 acres of land along Wooden-shoe Road and County G in the Town of Vinland was originally owned by the Armstrong Family Irrevocable Trust, which sold it for \$887,000 to Van Sistine Homes, owned by Rich Van Sistine of Neenah.

Van Sistine resold it to the city in 2020 at cost and entered into an agreement to develop and repurchase the land over 10 years, at cost plus 3% interest. The sale marked the city's first time entering into that type of agreement with a developer to promote housing development.

Deputy director of community development Brad Schmidt wrote in a memo that the partnership provided an opportunity for the city to secure a westward growth corridor that would have likely been developed in the Town of Vinland had the partnership not formed.

The development became the Freedom Acres and Homes at Freedom Meadows subdivisions. The initial development concept included six phases planned over a 10-year period, with 155 new single-family homes and a 2.9-acre neighborhood park.

"At the time of the initial agreement and during the preliminary phases of development, there was uncertainty in the economy due to the COVID-19 pandemic and challenges related to rising borrowing, construction material and labor costs," Schmidt said. "If the city were not a partner, it's likely the development may have been slowed or significantly scaled down."

Since 2020, three phases of develop-

ment were either completed or are under construction. A total of 61 single family lots were created on 38 acres of land, adding an estimated \$6 million of new tax base. Two additional phases of development are on track to begin by the end of the year, creating an additional 82 single-family lots on 48 acres.

By July, the developer will have re-purchased 86 acres of land and paid the city \$743,463, which exceeds the amount required by the development and repayment schedule.

The developer amended the development concept this year due to market demands, making it more efficient and creating an additional 87 single-family lots, an increase of 56%. The proposed neighborhood park was also relocated and increased in size to 4.5 acres.

Schmidt noted the new park location provides the flexibility to expand north and function as a community park rather than a neighborhood park. Funding for construction of the park is included in the city's five-year Capital Improvement Program.

The plat that the city is annexing from Vinland will be the fifth phase of the development plan and is currently undeveloped farmland contiguous to the city with the Freedom Acres subdivision situated to the east.

The development will extend Liberty Avenue, Founders Street and Honor Street to the west, with the name of the Honor Street extension expected to be changed to avoid confusion with Honor Street south and east of the development. A new street named Loyal Drive is also proposed.

The average lot size is about 21,022 square feet. Lots that back up to County G will be access restricted, preventing the properties from creating a driveway off that road. Sidewalks are planned on both sides of all the streets within the plat with the exception of Loyal Drive.

The final proposed plat is the second addition to the Freedom Meadows subdivision. The plat is 19.94 acres in size and includes 34 single-family residential lots and three outlots, with the average lot size about 16,000 square feet. The residential lots range in width from 70 to 175 feet.

The development includes the west extension of Liberty Avenue and Freedom Meadows Drive with two new streets named Valor Place and Patriot Way proposed. The street right of way is 60 feet wide except for Freedom Meadows Drive, which is 50 feet. Sidewalks are planned on both sides of all the streets within the development except for the north side of Freedom Meadows.

Stormwater will be managed through rear yard drainage swales, storm sewers and diverted to a detention pond along Freedom Meadows Drive east of the development. The pond is designed to manage stormwater for the subdivision and future phases within the development.

Schmidt said developers face ongoing challenges that impact the location and scale of growth, adding that city staff will continue working with developers to be creative in encouraging more homes in Neenah.

"While unique and somewhat unprecedented, this type of partnership between the city and a developer has been successful," he said.

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# District's Fox Crossing land sale stays with developer

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

The Neenah Joint School District is moving forward on plans to sell about 16 acres of land on Jacobsen Road in Fox Crossing to a housing developer after receiving an additional offer at \$20,000 more.

At a meeting last week, the Board of Education debated whether to sell the property to Good Faith Funding to be made into a housing development or to sell to neighboring resident Ryan Wirth, who said he would use the land for regenerative farming.

Both offers were for \$500,000. The Good Faith Funding offer came with the contingencies that the Village of Fox Crossing zone the land for redevelopment and that the buyer tests the bedrock for a depth of at least 8 feet, at the buyer's expense. Wirth's offer came with no contingencies.

The board ultimately decided to sell the property to Good Faith Funding with Wirth's offer in a secondary position in

case the contingencies cause the developer to back out.

Some of the reasons voiced at the meeting for accepting the Good Faith Funding offer is because the area is in need of housing that will add to the tax base, and that accepting Wirth's offer could be considered unfair because he submitted it after the board's first reading of the Good Faith Funding offer, so he was able to see the developer's offer in advance.

The day after the board voted to sell to Good Faith Funding, Wirth submitted a new offer for \$20,000 more than the accepted offer.

Communications director Jim Strick said with the assistance of legal counsel the board proceeded with what was voted on in public at last week's meeting and is moving forward on selling the property to Good Faith Funding.

Wirth told Neenah News that after the school board meeting several residents reached out to him with concerns about

the property sale.

"I'm very passionate about the land; I live right next to it (and) I have four kids," he said. "I would love to build something cool. I would love to employ community members, too. I know I'm not building 25 houses and gaining tax dollars like the other offer, but I am looking to do something pretty cool with the land."

He said when the two offers are considered side by side, his offer is the better one because it comes with \$10,000 earnest money when Good Faith Funding offered \$5,000, and that his closing date would be in December, while Good Faith's closing date is in March.

Resident Jason Mahn wrote an email to school officials this week, urging the board to reconsider the sale.

"While I understand the district's desire for more housing, I believe the economics and potential risks of the offers should

drive the decision," the email said in part. "The future developmental outlook of the city should be left to the city of Neenah."

Resident John Depies also voiced his concerns by email.

"As a taxpayer, I am deeply disturbed by the decision-making process and the final decision the school board made," he said. "This was not in the Neenah taxpayers' best interest and was deeply flawed."

Strick said Wirth's original offer of \$500,000 will remain in the secondary position for the sale.

The Jacobsen Road property is situated between Spring Road Elementary and Clayton Elementary and includes just over three acres of wetlands. Proceeds from the sale will help offset about \$15 million that the district is over budget to build the new high school in Fox Crossing, renovate the former high school and make upgrades throughout the district.

## District looks at southern boundary shift

Neenah News

The Neenah Joint School District is considering a shift in school boundaries in the southern portion of the district with recent shifts in population and the opening of Horace Mann Elementary School.

Two informational meetings will be held virtually at 11 a.m. Oct. 24 and 5:30 p.m. Oct. 25 to provide information about potential boundary changes to families in the school district, specifically those living in the Hoover Elementary, Coolidge Elementary, Horace Mann Elementary, Tullar Elementary and Lakeview Elementary boundary areas.

District officials said they anticipate that a potential boundary revision proposal will be presented to the Board of Education sometime this winter.

The link to the meeting will be available at [neenah.k12.wi.us](http://neenah.k12.wi.us) the time of the meeting. Questions will be taken through a form that will be provided at the meeting and on the website.

Answers to common questions will be posted along with other information after the meeting.

Immediate questions can be directed to Chad Buboltz, assistant district administrator for leadership and engagement.

## Ex-pastor sentenced in Portage County

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

A former Plover youth pastor was sentenced in Portage County last week to 20 years in prison for sexually assaulting a 12-year-old boy and is set to be sentenced in Winnebago County later this month for allegedly sexually assaulting a 12-year-old Appleton boy at a Fox Crossing hotel in May while on bond.

Jordan Huffman, 52, will also spend 20 years on extended supervision after being convicted of two felony counts of repeated sexual assault of the same child. Counts of first-degree child sexual assault, causing a child to view sex activity, intentionally contributing to the delinquency of a child and three counts of child enticement were dismissed but read into the record as part of the plea agreement.

According to the criminal complaint, in 2017 Huffman was a youth pastor at Woodlands Church when he began mentoring a 12-year-old child who was getting into trouble at school. Documents say the boy told authorities Huffman gave him alcohol, prescription pills and marijuana, and sexually assaulted him repeatedly.

The assaults continued for five years and while the child said none of them occurred at the Woodlands Church, in 2020 Huffman took a job at Forest Lakes District Evangelical Free Church of America in Stevens Point and some of the encounters took place in his office there. The child's parents reported the assaults to police early last year.

Huffman was formerly living in Antigo but was residing in Oshkosh while on bond for assaulting the Plover boy. Ac-

ording to a criminal complaint, in the early morning hours of May 19 a 12-year-old Appleton boy placed a call to 911 stating that he was in a vehicle at an unknown hotel after being kidnapped and he needed help.

The boy told officers he was communicating with Huffman through Snapchat earlier that day and Huffman sent him nude photos. The boy had his Snapchat location on and a little while later Huffman showed up at his house. The boy said he was scared and thought he should call police but went with Huffman because he was "going to probably kill me or something."

Huffman allegedly began assaulting the boy during the drive to the hotel. When they arrived, Huffman went inside to rent a room and the boy stayed in the car and called 911. When Huffman returned to the vehicle, he brought the boy inside the hotel room where he continued assaulting him.

The boy told authorities that the assault went on for several minutes until he pretended his mom was calling and told Huffman he needed to be taken home. Surveillance footage showed the boy exiting the hotel room and running to the car, with Huffman behind. The boy dialed 911 again while in the vehicle and shortly after Fox Crossing Police initiated a traffic stop and arrested Huffman.

Huffman was charged in Winnebago County with first-degree child sexual assault, child enticement and three counts of bail jumping. In July, he entered not guilty pleas to all the charges. He is due back in court Oct. 31.

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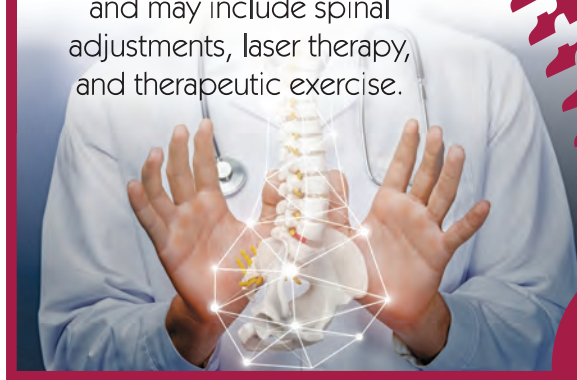
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# Police cleared in fatal Neenah gas station shooting

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

Details surrounding a fatal police shooting that took place at a Neenah Mobil gas station Aug. 2 were released this week and the officers cleared of wrongdoing.

The victim has been identified as Nathan Briese, 38, of Neenah. The Sheboygan County Sheriff's Office was called in to investigate the shooting and Sheboygan County District Attorney Joel Urmanski reviewed the case. The findings were detailed in a press release issued Tuesday.

Sheboygan County Sheriff Cory Roeseler wrote that due to the confidential nature of undercover investigations, the names of the officers who shot Briese will not be released.

According to a synopsis provided by Roeseler, an Outagamie sheriff's officer and an Appleton police officer working undercover with the Lake Winnebago Area Metropolitan Enforcement Group (MEG) unit were investigating Briese for drug-related offenses when they attempted to arrest him in a gas station on South Commercial Street.

Briese began to run toward the back of the gas station when confronted by the officers and then spun around, lifted his shirt and grabbed a handgun. The Appleton officer began firing and the Outagamie officer "provided lethal cover."

Briese was transported to Thedacare Regional Medical Center where he died. An autopsy indicated he was shot four times in the head, torso and extremities. Roeseler estimated the time from law enforcement entry into the store to Briese being shot was about 8 seconds or less. The firearm Briese possessed was collected from the floor of the gas station and identified as a 9mm pistol.

Urmanski concluded that the investigators' actions were reasonable and that no criminal charges should be issued. Roeseler said Tuesday that videos of the incident would be posted online this week.

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## Menasha police shoot, kill man in domestic dispute incident

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

A man was fatally shot by police Saturday in Menasha, marking the second deadly police shooting in the area in as many months.

The officer-involved critical incident took place Oct. 7 when officers from the Menasha and Fox Crossing police departments responded to a domestic dispute in the 1100 block of Geneva Road in Menasha at around 3 p.m.

Upon arriving, police encountered a man armed with "bladed weapons," according to a press release. An officer from the Menasha Police Department discharged his gun and struck the man. First aid was rendered but the man was pronounced dead at the scene.

The officer who shot the man was placed on administrative leave. The state Department of Justice's Division of Criminal Investigation is leading the investigation with assistance from the Wisconsin State Patrol, Winnebago County Sheriff's Office and Neenah Police Department.

The name of the man who was shot and the name of the officer who shot him were not released, which mirrors the events after a fatal police shooting Aug. 2 in Neenah.

The crime victims' rights amendment Marsy's Law has recently been used by public safety officials throughout Wisconsin and across the country to withhold names of officers involved and those who are killed in police shootings.

The crime victims' rights amendment Marsy's Law has recently been used by public safety officials throughout Wisconsin and across the country to withhold names of officers involved and those who are killed in police shootings.



Neenah Historical Society photo

## 150 years of fashion

As Neenah wraps up its sesquicentennial year, the Neenah Historical Society is paying homage to its history through fashion. A curated collection of antique and vintage clothing will be modeled and on display during the Oct. 28 event. More information can be found on the Neenah Historical Society website.



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# Solo release debut adds personal touch to growing career

By Jenny Grunwald  
NEENAH NEWS

Singer-songwriter, producer and multi-instrumentalist Michael Murphy has released his debut solo album, "Indigo Jones." Written when the Neenah native was studying abroad in London, the album is somewhat of a concept album based on a fictional cowboy.

Born and raised here with his two brothers, the 22-year-old Murphy comes from a musical family on both sides of the family. Murphy's mother is a violinist for the Fox Valley Symphony Orchestra and Murphy's father grew up in a musical household. Naturally, Murphy and his siblings were exposed to all kinds of different music and instruments starting at a young age.

Murphy was enrolled in classes at Lawrence Community Music School – connected to Lawrence University in Appleton – before he could talk, and his first instrument was the cello. That later transitioned into a guitar, which he has been playing ever since.

As Murphy grew older, music remained an essential part of his life. Through his school years, he took every music class he had time for, learning everything from show choir to jazz band. In 2012, Murphy and his two brothers created a family band called Murphy's Law, and soon started playing around the community as they progressively grew as musicians.

The brothers started as a Beatles tribute band and over time explored other classical artists from the 1960s and '70s. They started playing at the Neenah Farmer's Market, where they outgrew the space there, then the Thursday Out to Lunch series and later the Evening Concert Series, all at Shattuck Park.

The band started to get recognized and got offered to do a show in Chicago for an acquaintance of Elvis Presley.

"We actually got picked up to play a show down in Chicago for Joe Esposito, who was Elvis Presley's best friend and did some management work for him," recalled Murphy.

After Murphy graduated high school, he began attending Lawrence University to major in neuroscience, but later realized music was his true calling.

"I was saying that I was committed to neuroscience, and I changed my major and was like, 'What am I doing? I pay for school by gigging, it's what I do, and I can make it work,'" Murphy said. "I don't know what else I would do."

Now that he has a music degree from Lawrence, he is taking the bull by the horns and diving into the music industry with no looking back. Besides his solo album, Murphy has been playing with Steem, a Fox Valley band led by Mike Bailey and Steve March-Torme.

"I remember getting the call from Mike Bailey asking if I would join the band," said Murphy, who had a quick audition and now plays with them on guitar.

During Murphy's college experience he decided to study abroad in London and finish writing his solo album in Italy. While wandering around Europe he stumbled across an old church in Florence where he meant to name his album after the church architect.

"It was made in the 15th century by an architect named Inigo Jones. I misread the name and then wrote a giant poem about a fake cowboy named Indigo Jones," he said. "I then proceeded to write a series of poems intertwining that and heartbreak love



Submitted photo

Singer-songwriter Michael Murphy recently released his first solo album with "Indigo Jones."

songs."

Music lovers and Murphy fans can expect an album influenced and inspired by artists such as Peter Dinklage and David Bowie. Murphy mustered up all the inspiration he could get for the album while he was in London by taking in all the art and music surrounding him and that he already loved.

"I have no better time and no better place to be writing something than here, and that has springboarded with every other project that I'm doing now," Murphy beamed.

At the end of a typically busy day, Murphy said he believes he owes it to the city he calls home for the places he has been and the things he has experienced in pursuing a lifelong career as a working musician.

"I'm very thankful for growing up in Neenah to be surrounded by amazing

people, surrounded by amazing art. Even outside of Neenah, go up to Appleton, go down to Oshkosh, there's always stuff happening," he said. "Those three cities, it's like you can just fit in any direction and find amazing musicians who will give you the time of day and who will kind of show you the ropes."

Murphy and March-Torme will be performing Elton John's 1970 release "Tumbleweed Connection" in their rendition called "Tumbleweed Reconnection" at the Thelma Sadoff Center for the Arts in Fond du Lac today and Saturday, and with Steem for the group's annual Christmas tour.

"Indigo Jones" is available on all streaming platforms. Ticket information is available on [mpmurphymusic.com](http://mpmurphymusic.com) or his Facebook page.

## Health Department encourages getting vaccine boosters this fall

Winnebago County Public Health officials encourage residents to take advantage of the protection available this year from three of the most common respiratory illnesses that have more frequency in the fall.

"Now is the start of our peak respira-

tory illness season," said Doug Gieryn, Winnebago County Public Health director. "Staying up to date on your vaccinations and keeping away from others when you're sick can help minimize the risk of severe illness for you and your family and friends."

Vaccines that combat RSV and the latest strains of flu and COVID-19 are available and free under most insurance plans. The updated COVID-19 vaccine is available at no cost; visit [vaccines.gov](http://vaccines.gov) or contact a pharmacy or health care provider. Questions about the vaccine or help finding a place to get vaccinated can be found at Winnebago County Public Health.

Care providers can offer a rapid test for flu, RSV or COVID-19. Free at-home COVID-19 test kits can be ordered from [covid.gov/tests](http://covid.gov/tests). Those with COVID can visit [wchd.pub/covid19positive](http://wchd.pub/covid19positive) for the latest guidance.

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## Business news roundup

United Way Fox Cities has appointed **Mary Downs** as its interim executive director while the board of directors continues in its search for a permanent president and chief executive. Most recently, Downs was president and chief executive of Catalpa Health, a mental health agency for children in the Fox Valley. Downs has also worked in various leadership roles at Fox Valley Technical College, ThedaCare and spent more than 20 years at Thrivent.

McMahon engineering and architectural firm has hired **Brooklyn Brickham** as an architectural designer and **Mike McClone** as a senior municipal technician at its headquarters in Wisconsin. Brickham is a graduate of Northeast Wisconsin Technical College where she earned her associate degree in architecture. McClone joins McMahon's Environmental & Infrastructure division bringing with him 28 years of municipal service in civil engineering, land surveying and environmental permitting.

**Fox Valley Technical College** has been named a PULSE Champion of Young Professionals (YPs) by the Fox Cities Chamber. This designation recognizes employers who pledge to provide support and a positive work environment for YPs within their company. FVTC is part of the largest higher education system in the state, the Wisconsin Technical College System, and offers more than 200 associate degree, technical diploma and certificate programs, and instruction related to 19 apprenticeship trades, in addition to providing services to business and industry. The college serves over 50,000 people annually.

**New North Inc.** was the recipient of a 2023 Community and Economic Development Award (CEDA) from the Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA). New North was recognized in the Talent Attraction, Development and Retention category for its New Boost for Hidden Talent Initiative. The CEDA Awards were established by WEDA to recognize economic development projects and programs, as well as businesses and organizations that are making significant contributions to Wisconsin's economy.

**Bergstrom Automotive's Drive for A Cure** to support breast cancer research programs in Wisconsin raised \$35,487 on Oct. 6 and 7. Of that amount, \$29,144 was generated from guest test drives and \$6,343 from donations and social media initiatives. This brings our Drive for A Cure grand total to more than \$621,000 donated for breast cancer research in Wisconsin. A special fleet of 100 Bergstrom cars, trucks, SUVs and EVs were available to test drive. All proceeds raised are donated to the Medical College of Wisconsin.



Neenah High School

Lead actors for Neenah High School's "Mamma Mia" are (from left) Macy Schmidt, Alivia Haller, Aria Giddings and Claudia Bjornstad.

### 'Mamma Mia!' to take stage at Neenah High

Neenah High School will host five shows of "Mamma Mia!" as its annual fall musical Wednesday through Sunday in the high school Performing Arts Center. Shows will be at 7 p.m. except for the Oct. 22 matinee performance at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students and senior citizens. Reserved tickets are available at [Rocketplayers.com](http://Rocketplayers.com) and will be available at the door beginning an hour before each show.

The annual senior citizens dinner theater will precede the Oct. 18 performance at 5:30 p.m. with the Touch of Class orchestra followed by the opening night show. Tickets may be purchased at the school's main entrance during the day.

"Mamma Mia!" is being presented through a special arrangement with Musical Theater International, which also supplies all authorized performance materials.

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## Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass Re-accreditation Celebration

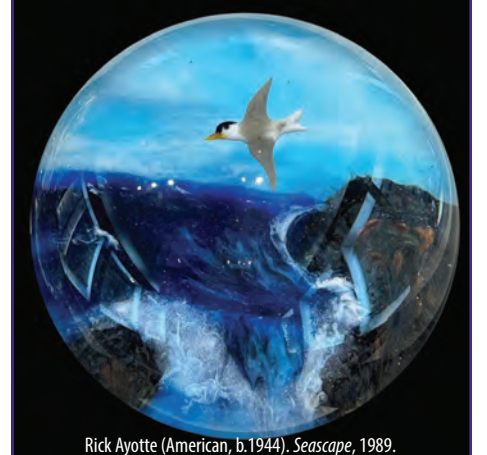


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Rick Ayotte (American, b.1944). Seascape, 1989.

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Lauren Ritters, PhD  
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Photo from Valley VNA

The second phase of Valley VNA Senior Care's expansion and remodeling project will be marked next week with a ribbon-cutting event.

## Valley VNA Senior Care opens new addition

Valley VNA Senior Care will showcase its 11-room addition and Amber Court update, the second phase of its \$9.5 million addition and remodeling project, with a public ribbon cutting at 10 a.m. Thursday.

Construction on Valley VNA Senior Care started in 2021 with discussions of the capital campaign dating back several years prior. The new addition opening this

month marks the halfway point of construction, with full completion planned for December 2024.

The Caring for Generations campaign enables Valley VNA to enhance and advance the safety of common area spaces such as bathrooms, kitchens, dining areas and lounges. Other living quarters, outdoor courtyards and special amenities like

the Namaste Room, Fitness Center and other spaces will be added or improved.

What started as a \$6.25 million project grew to \$9.5 million due to construction costs, state regulations, labor and inflation costs. To learn more about the campaign, visit valleyvna.org or contact director of marketing and development Tracy Nikolai at 920-727-5555.

## Making Democracy Work Award nominations sought

The League of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities is seeking nominees for its Making Democracy Work Award honoring the civic work of individuals or organizations in their community.

The award celebrates those who have envisioned a way to improve the Fox Cities community and mobilized others to

work with them to effect change, according to League president Linda Bjella.

Eligible nominees include adults, youth under age 21 or organizations. Nominations can be submitted through Nov. 1 with forms found [lwvappletonfoxcities.org](http://lwvappletonfoxcities.org). The award presentation will take place at the League's Holiday Brunch on

Dec. 16.

Last year the awards went to former Appleton City Council and Outagamie County Board member Helen Nagler posthumously with a Lifetime Achievement Award; Ronna Swift with the MDW Award, and Xavier High School student Maggie McGinnis with the Youth MDW Award.

## Annual Trick-or-Treat Trail set at Fritsch Park

The Fox Crossing Parks & Recreation Department is hosting the 10th annual Trick-or-Treat Trail from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday at Fritsch Park.

There are about 600 children and their families anticipated for the event, which requires preregistration by contacting [ageiser@foxcrossingwi.gov](mailto:ageiser@foxcrossingwi.gov) or 920-720-7108.

Participants can take a walk through the jack o' lantern lit trails where there will be 31 candy stations with local businesses and volunteers passing out candy and additional give-a-ways. Families can stop back in the pavilion for a cup of hot chocolate next to a warm bonfire near the pavilion with an opportunity to make s'mores.

Students from Menasha High School's art program are carving the pumpkins that will be on display throughout the trail.

## Breast surgeon emphasizes early detection as key

ThedaCare Communications

New guidelines earlier this year from the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF) have lowered the age at which women should begin having regular mammograms from age 50 to 40.

"The new guidelines recommend that women with an average risk of developing breast cancer begin having mammograms at age 40," said Dr. Honnie Bermas, a breast surgeon with Fox Valley Surgical Specialists, a partner of ThedaCare Cancer Care. "Many breast cancer experts ... support women having an annual mammogram with the hope that early detection will reduce the number of breast cancer cases discovered at a later stage."

The USPSTF is an independent, volunteer panel of medical experts working to improve public health by making evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services such as screenings, counseling services and preventive medications. Its recommendations frequently influence insurance plan coverage and guidelines from providers.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month, and ThedaCare along with the ACS and BCRF strongly encourages women to schedule regular mammograms. After skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer in women and the second leading cause of cancer deaths in women.

Bermas noted that a woman's risk for developing breast cancer changes as she ages. Other risk factors include family history, genetics, race, weight, pregnancy history and lifestyle choices.

She recommends women discuss their breast cancer risk with their primary care provider or gynecologist as early as age 25.

"It's important to discuss family history, which is a major factor in developing breast cancer, and determine whether the patient is at a high risk and, if so, what the proper screening program should be for that patient," she said.

Bermas noted most insurance companies and Medicare/Medicaid cover the cost of one screening mammogram annually beginning now at age 40.

On average, American women have a 13% chance of developing breast cancer in their lifetime, according to the ACS. Those odds change depending upon age, family history, race and ethnicity. Black women and Ashkenazi Jews have a higher incidence of breast cancer.

For more information about recommended screenings, visit [ThedaCare.org](http://ThedaCare.org).

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# Calendar of events

**Friday, Oct. 13**

Footloose Friday, 10:30 a.m., Neenah Public Library

**Saturday, Oct. 14**

Future Neenah Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Shattuck Park

Halloween Kids' Day, 8 a.m., Shattuck Park

Build-A-Scarecrow, 10:30 a.m., Riverside Park Pavilion

Foxtoberfest music concert, 2:30 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 200 S. Church St.

**Tuesday, Oct. 17**

Trick-or-Treat Trail, 5 p.m., Fritsch Park, Fox Crossing

**Wednesday, Oct. 18**

Hollywood Master Directors, 1 p.m., Neenah-Menasha YMCA

Rocket Players dinner theater "Mamma Mia!" 5:30 p.m., Neenah High School

**Thursday, Oct. 19**

Downtown Neenah Blood Drive, 8 a.m., DoubleTree Neenah Hotel

Rocket Players: "Mamma Mia!" 7

p.m., Neenah High School

Founders and Settlers History Program: Amos Page and the Rev. O.P. Clinton, 7 p.m., Neenah Public Library

**Friday, Oct. 20**

"Loosen the Grip" book signing with Lisa Anderson, 4:30 p.m., Lawlss Coffee, 124 W. Wisconsin Ave.

Rocket Players: "Mamma Mia!" 7 p.m., Neenah High School

**Saturday, Oct. 21**

Electronics Recycling Event, 8 a.m., Neenah City Garage, 1495 Tullar Road

Monster Mash Dance Party, 10:30 a.m., Neenah Public Library

Author Meet & Greet with Malissa Chapin, 11 a.m., Lyons Books, 127 W. Wisconsin Ave.

Rocket Players: "Mamma Mia!" 7 p.m., Neenah High School

**Sunday, Oct. 22**

Rocket Players: "Mamma Mia!" 2 p.m., Neenah High School

**Friday, Oct. 27**

Pumpkin carving and painting, 1:30 p.m., The Brigade, 109 W. Columbian Ave.

Costume Skate, 5 p.m., The Plaza & Globe Coffee

**Saturday, Oct. 28**

Author Meet & Greet with Gordon D. Lind, noon, Lyons Books, 127 W. Wisconsin Ave.

## Cybersecurity gets extra focus this month

In observation of Gov. Tony Evers recognizing October as Cybersecurity Awareness Month in Wisconsin, DATCP is partnering with the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) and Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) to share educational materials about how individuals and organizations can protect personal data, private information, and the digital networks and systems.

The theme of this year's national campaign, Secure Our World, emphasizes that as we become more dependent on technology, it is more important than ever to strengthen and adapt cybersecurity hab-

its. Cybersecurity practices can require some effort, but they are simple, effective and easy to remember. DATCP, DOA, WEM and the National Cybersecurity Alliance and Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency recommend these steps to improve online privacy and safety:

- Update software regularly to optimize performance and minimize security risks.
- Create strong, unique passwords and consider using a password manager.
- Enable multifactor login authentication on digital accounts.
- Recognize and report phishing attempts.

## Roadwork fee

FROM PAGE 1

TARF fee replaces the special assessments, reducing the cost impact on residents.

The TARF charge for all developed single-family residential properties is based on one IAU, billed quarterly. Businesses and nonprofits are charged based on their calculated IAUs, up to a maximum of 90.

TARF revenue is only used for street reconstruction, resurfacing and sidewalk construction and does not eliminate special assessments for sanitary sewer lateral replacement and new street construction.

Neenah's TARF was set at a fixed rate for five years, leading the city to evaluate it last month in anticipation of setting a new rate that would go into effect Jan. 1.

Next year, a residential property owner would see an increase in their quarterly utility bill from \$5.75 to \$12. For property owners at the 90 IAU cap, their quarterly TARF would increase from \$517.50 to \$1,080.

At \$23 per IAU, the annual revenue generated by the TARF is about \$468,000. By increasing the fee to \$48 per IAU, the city

would generate about \$977,000 annually, which would cover about 37% of the total project costs.

Director of public works Gerry Kaiser wrote in a memo that the TARF increase is primarily due to general construction cost increases since 2020 and an increased volume of work performed, especially street reconstructions.

Under the existing resolution, the TARF fee is waived for properties that received special assessments for street resurfacing or street construction within the past five years. The waiver also applied to properties that were specially assessed for new subdivision street construction within the past five years.

The city's Finance & Personnel Committee discussed at a meeting last month whether a five-year waiver should apply to recent new subdivision construction and if the TARF increase to \$48 should be implemented in full next year or implemented incrementally over several years.

A resolution for the TARF increase is expected to be presented at the Oct. 23 committee meeting before heading to the Common Council for a vote.

## Museum celebrates reaccreditation with events

Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass is having a celebration of its recent American Alliance of Museums reaccreditation by hosting several events this month. Originally awarded accreditation in 1974, the museum is one of 21 museums in the state to be accredited and one of only 11 fine art museums to be accredited.

"If These Walls Could Talk," a behind-the-scenes tour, is set for 2 p.m. Sunday. Next week is Wisconsin Science Festival Week with glass blowing demonstrations at 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. Tuesday and a "Why Do Birds Sing?" presentation by Lauren Ritters at 6 p.m. Thursday. More information can be found at [bmmglass.com](http://bmmglass.com).

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# Neenah looks to keep things rolling in regular-season finale

By Steve Clark  
NEENAH NEWS

It will be business as usual for the Neenah High School football team entering the final week of the regular season.

The Rockets, who are in a four-way battle atop the Fox Valley Association, will travel to Oshkosh on Friday night to tussle with Oshkosh North on JJ Keller Field at Titan Stadium.

The Spartans have not won a conference game all season and are coming off a 41-0 loss to rival Oshkosh West last week. North has been shut out four times this season and hasn't scored in the first half since a Week 2 win over Green Bay Southwest.

Neenah doesn't want the Spartans' first-half point total to change.

"We want to come out fast like we did when we played Oshkosh West there," said Neenah head coach Steve Jung. "We scored on our first three possessions in the game and forced some early three-and-outs, and we want to do that again."

Jung said he isn't worried about his team looking past Oshkosh North to what lies ahead in the postseason.

He believes the team has been very good about focusing on each opponent every week and will continue that in preparation to face North.

"Our goal is to get better every day and go 1-0 every day," Jung said. "We have to keep getting better and we will do that by improving every day in practice."

The Rockets will head into the game

## Week 9 games

### Fox Valley Association

(records reflect FVA games)

- Neenah (4-2) at Oshkosh North (0-6)
- Kimberly (5-1) at Appleton North (4-2)
- Appleton East (1-5) at Kaukauna (5-1)
- Oshkosh West (2-4) at Fond du Lac (3-3)

with freshman Ashton Van Beek at quarterback again, with starter Evan Vanevenhoven nursing an ankle injury. Jung said it may be a couple of weeks yet before Vanevenhoven returns.

But Van Beek has done well in the starting role for the Rockets and led the team to a 14-7 win against Fond du Lac last week. Grant Dean rushed for 210 yards and two touchdowns in the win and will likely get some carries against the Spartans.

However, if the Rockets can get an early lead on the Spartans, they may turn to some of their younger players to get some valuable time as the team does look ahead to the postseason.

"We would love to be as healthy as possible going into the playoffs and have it come off of a win," Jung said. "We are pretty healthy right now so we want to keep things that way."

If there is something that does concern Jung it's that North does have some skill position players that are capable of breaking big plays.

Neenah must contain running back Jamarie Scott and versatile receivers Dalton Clark and Charlie Clark in order to keep the Spartans at bay.

"They do have some talent at the skill positions and we have to be aware of those players," Jung said.

Neenah has qualified for the playoffs but the Rockets still have an outside chance of repeating as conference champions, too.

Currently, Kimberly and Kaukauna lead the league with 5-1 records, with Neenah and Appleton North tied for third at 4-2. If Neenah wins and Appleton North beats Kimberly, with Kaukauna losing at home

SEE **Prep football** ON PAGE 15

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# Prep sports roundup

## TENNIS

### Neenah edges Notre Dame for sectional title

The Rockets had three flights claim sectional titles as they won the Division 1 sectional last week.

Neenah and Green Bay Notre Dame each finished the sectional tournament with 45 points, but Neenah advanced to the Team State Tournament based on a tiebreaker. The Rockets will face Whitefish Bay in a quarterfinal match Friday, Oct. 20, at Nielsen Tennis Stadium.

Seniors Annalise Zenzick and Paige Stielow won the No. 1 doubles title to punch their ticket to the individual state meet. Zenzick and Stielow won all three matches at sectionals in straight sets, edging Notre Dame's Kennedy May and Lilia Root 6-4, 6-4, for the title.

The duo will be joined at the state meet by No. 1 singles player Izzy Murray, who finished second in her bracket. Murray pulled out a three-set win in the semifinals over Notre Dame's Lucy Lawton before falling in the finals.

The other sectional champions for Neenah were Rebekah Thomas at No. 3 singles and the No. 3 doubles team of Ava Motto and Cecelia Alexander.

Celia Gentile fell in a three-set heartbreaker in the No. 2 singles title match to take second in her flight, while the No. 2 doubles team of Kinsey Perry and Meredith Werner placed third and No. 4 singles player Norah Spanbauer finished fourth.

The individual state tournament began Thursday at Nielsen Tennis Stadium, however, results of the early rounds of the tournament were not available by deadline.

### Zephyrs send two flights to state tournament

Both of St. Mary Catholic's No. 1 flights advanced to the WIAA Division 2 Individual State Tournament following sectional play last week at Kohler.

No. 1 singles player Adel Schneider qualified by finishing second in her flight. She dropped only one game in winning her first two matches, but fell 6-1, 6-4 to Kohler's Maria Burrows in the title match.

At No. 1 doubles, Emily Vogel and Kas-



Submitted photo

The Neenah High School girls tennis team captured a WIAA Division 1 sectional title last week and will be competing at the Team State Tournament Oct. 20 in Madison.

sadi Calmes won their first-round match over a Sheboygan Falls pairing to earn their trip to state. The duo would finish fourth at sectionals after losing a three-set third-place match.

The individual state tournament began Thursday at Nielsen Tennis Stadium, however, results of the early rounds of the tournament were not available by deadline.

Other sectional finishers for the Zephyrs saw No. 4 singles player Erin Blaney take second, No. 2 singles player Audrey Wanless finish third and No. 3 singles player Alice Cole take fourth.

In doubles, St. Mary Catholic's No. 3 pairing of Kaylee Sommerfeld and Nolie Anderson finished second, while the No. 2 pairing of Mackenzie Barmash-Turner and Nadia Alexander finished fourth.

## SWIMMING

### Neenah dominates meet against Fond du Lac

The Rockets won every event and post-

ed a pair of 1-2-3 finishes in rolling to a 132-51 win in a Fox Valley Association dual meet Tuesday.

Neenah swept the top three places in the diving competition with Hannah Slabbert, Sydney Hansman and Ceci Pirwitz, respectively, while Emma Bottensek was first, Breleigh Maurer was second and Sadie Wendell took third in the 100-yard freestyle.

Bottensek added a second win in the

100-yard breaststroke with Anna Mulroy also winning two events, taking first in the 50-yard freestyle and 500-yard freestyle.

Other event winners for Neenah were Alliyah Lima in the 200-yard freestyle, Naomi Cortina in the 100-yard butterfly and Kacie Stamm in the 100-yard backstroke.

Neenah also won all three relays with

SEE **Prep roundup** ON PAGE 15

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# Schultz brings physicality, love of football to field

By Steve Clark  
NEENAH NEWS

Before this season, St. Mary Catholic senior John Schultz didn't spend much time playing offense.

With the Zephyrs playing 8-player football, the team had enough depth to keep players playing either offense or defense so Schultz focused in on being a linebacker.

With the switch to 11-player football this season, the standout linebacker has taken up a spot on the offense as well and



Schultz

is shining on both sides of the line of scrimmage for the Zephyrs.

"It's pretty tiring because I'm not totally used to it, but I love it. I love being on the field as much as I can," Schultz said earlier this week. "I love the physicality of (football). I don't know of many sports that rewards you for hitting somebody as hard as you can. There's just something about it that's so fun."

Schultz has excelled whether on offense or defense this season.

As a linebacker, Schultz leads the team with 140 tackles – more than double any other player on the squad – with three sacks and an interception. As a running back, he has rushed for a team-high 347 yards and six touchdowns – he also has six catches and a receiving touchdown – and is averaging more than five yards per carry.



Although playing both is new for him this season, Schultz spent his formative years in the sport playing both so it was an easy transition to rekindle his running back skills.

"Playing in elementary and middle school I was pretty much a linebacker and running back so it does feel natural," Schultz said. "I find it so much fun to be getting the ball and making some plays and hitting some kids and all of that."

Schultz admits there is some correlation between the two positions and he can use his knowledge of each position to help him.

He also said that there is a little bit of linebacker in his running style, meaning he's more likely to run into a defender than run around him.

"Everybody makes fun of me because (when I run the ball), I could make the most simple move to get to the outside but I choose to go straight at the defender and just lower my (shoulder)," Schultz said, adding unapologetically, "That's what I love to do."

Schultz was a key member of the Zephyrs' back-to-back unbeaten 8-player football teams the previous two seasons.



Submitted photo

St. Mary Catholic's John Schultz is the leading rusher this season while also racking up the most tackles on the team.

He was the team's third-leading tackler last season in earning first-team all-conference honors, while garnering honorable mention all-league honors as a sophomore. That season he also scored his first varsity touchdown – even though he wasn't playing offense.

"It was our Homecoming game and Dan Harness, I think, who stripped the ball and I picked up and ran about 60 yards for a touchdown," Schultz said. "It was our Homecoming night so it was pretty sweet."

This season hasn't gone the way the team had hoped but Schultz still has enjoyed being on the field every Friday representing St. Mary Catholic and being part of the team.

"It's like a culture or a brotherhood almost. Everybody is out there having fun together and playing for each other," Schultz said. "I 100 percent think it's different (than at a bigger school). You see everybody in the school and there is hardly anybody you don't know. You are basically forced to get along. But that's a good thing."

Schultz's competitive nature may have been formed in his driveway and backyard growing up as the youngest of eight siblings – all of whom attended St. Mary Catholic.

He said that he and his siblings were always doing something active and highlighted his older brother, James, as having affected his football path.

"He was always bigger than me and he

would always push me around and made me as tough as I am today. I have to thank him for that," Schultz said. "My family has been super supportive and that's been great. We always got along. Those were fun and good times."

And after all of the time spent growing up with his siblings, he had no trouble picking out the best athlete of the group.

"Me, of course," Schultz said with a laugh. "I think (if you asked my siblings) they would say that we saved the best for last."

Schultz doesn't plan to play football in college and so his playing career on the gridiron is winding down.

The Zephyrs will travel to Cambria-Friesland on Friday before returning home for a 10th regular-season game against Green Bay West.

Even with the program's struggles this season, capping the season with a win or two would certainly leave things on a high note. But even if the Zephyrs fall short, Schultz has certainly valued his time in the program and the memories he will take away.

"I will miss putting in the work every week. You put in the work every week and get the reward of the game on Friday," Schultz said. "It's going to be tough. I'm already missing it because I know it's coming to a close. Not looking forward to the end of it. It's going to be rough but I'm just enjoying it while I can."

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# Neenah dealt first loss in tough battle with De Pere

By Dustin Riese  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

It is hard enough to go through an entire Fox Valley Association season and win the conference championship, let alone not lose a game.

That is precisely what the Rockets have done this season as they recently capped off an unbeaten conference season to claim their first conference title since 2019, while also posting an unbeaten record heading into Saturday's contest with De Pere.

The Redbirds entered the match with only one loss and with just one shot in the second half De Pere collected a 1-0 win, to hand Neenah their lone loss of the 2023 season.

"This game is a mental game and you need to play for a full 80 minutes," head coach William Krautkramer said. "We didn't do that today and it cost us in the end. We played a good 30 minutes, but the rest of the game we lacked the focus we needed to have. That is a great program over there played with a ton of physicality and they were able to knock us off."

Neither team was able to get much of anything going in the early stages as it took 12 minutes for De Pere to generate the first shot of the game. The Rockets responded a few minutes later with Blake Rhodes taking the first shot of the game for Neenah only to have it fly just wide.

That was the point in the first half when both teams started to get things rolling on the offensive end, but neither team was able to do anything as Brayden Coyle and Julian Gallmeier continued to stand tall in goal to keep things tied 0-0 after one half of play. This wasn't one of the Rockets better halves of play this season and there was a lot that Krautkramer felt contributed to that.

"We had a lot of things going on this week that were not soccer related and that may have been part of our sluggish start today," he said. "The kids have homecoming and perhaps that was part of their focus today, but throughout the morning we just didn't seem to be focussed. Losing focus against a team as good as De Pere isn't going to end well and we found that out today."

Looking to strike first in the second half, it was the Rockets who came out with a sense of urgency and started to put the pressure on the Redbirds defense. That resulted in an Owen Wise free kick only to have Coyle come away with another save.

All it took for the Redbirds to grab the lead was one defensive breakdown and that came six minutes into the second half.



Photo by Dustin Riese

Neenah's Grant Romjue tries to work around a De Pere defender Saturday.

With the Rockets trying to get sorted on the defensive end, De Pere's Joe Picard beat Gallmeier to the far post for a 1-0 lead. That was the only goal they would need as Coyle came through with several clutch saves throughout the game.

The goal seemed to awaken the Rockets offense a bit. In the 54th minute, the Rockets came away with three corner kicks that put the Redbirds' defense in a tough position.

Unfortunately, Neenah was unable to capitalize on those corners as they continued to trail.

"We came out of the gates extremely slow today and that is very uncharacteristic of us," senior forward AJ Price said. "Once we got down we started to play with more of a sense of urgency, which led to more chances. When we get down we tend to play a little bit tougher, which is what we did during the second half. We just need to do a better job starting fast so we don't put ourselves in a desperate spot."

It was in the 63rd minute when De Pere caught a huge break.

After a foul was committed by the De Pere defense, Neenah was awarded a free kick from about 40 yards out. Romjue sent the ball inside the penalty area where Caleb Reddick was left alone in the box. Reddick got his right foot on it and it appeared to be going in, only to have Coyle come away with an incredible kick save to keep the Redbirds in front. Krautkramer

felt this was the moment his team started to play the way they have all season.

"It took 63 minutes, but we finally settled in to play our game," he said. "We have a tendency to play harder when we fall behind and you saw that today. Credit their goalie for keeping us off the board. He played phenomenal and is the main reason we couldn't find the back of the net."

That was followed by another long ball over the top of the De Pere defense with several other corner kicks, but the Rock-

ets couldn't get a goal as they continued to trail with less than 15 minutes to go. Neenah had several other chances throughout the second half, including one with nine minutes to go as Romjue got in position for a header but Coyle came through with another save.

That was the final scoring opportunity for either side as De Pere closed out the win.

"This season has been amazing for not just me, but for our entire team," Price said. "We have been working toward achieving this goal for the past four years. Credit Coach Krautkramer for preparing us and having us ready every day. The entire coaching staff did a great job preparing us all season long and all of us worked extremely hard to earn the conference championship this season."

Krautkramer reiterated his pride in the way the team has played all season.

"I couldn't be more proud of this group and all they have accomplished so far this season," Krautkramer said. "This conference championship has been two years in the making since I took over for coach Ross. Once I took over, I simplified everything that our program stands for and I let the kids know that. However, you can't coach effort. It is up to the players to buy into what you are coaching and every single one of these kids have done that and they are the reason why we can bring home the FVA crown this season."

Neenah will begin regional play Tuesday when they host Sheboygan South. The Rockets earned the No. 3 seed for the postseason and will be guaranteed at least two home games should they win the first game.



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# DeShambo finds fit with powerhouse Warhawks

By Steve Clark  
NEENAH NEWS

Addison DeShambo was simply working out in the weight room during his freshman year at UW-Whitewater when he drew the eyes of a few others.

It just happened that those taking notice were members of the school's Division III powerhouse football team, including future NFL player Quinn Meinerz.

"I didn't initially go out for the football team," DeShambo said. "It was on the agenda, but I wanted to take my first year and get used to being at college and the academics and set myself on the right path that way.

"A couple of football players took notice of me in the weight room and Quinn Meinerz called me out and asked me to play."

DeShambo had played four years at St. Mary Catholic and earned honorable mention all-conference honors on the offensive line as a senior. But stepping from that program – which went 0-9 in his final two seasons – to one that contends for the national title every year seemed like a pretty big step.

But with the backing of some of the offensive linemen he met in the weight room, DeShambo was ready to see if he could play at that level. Unfortunately, the pandemic had other ideas.

"I started talking to the coaches after the (2019) season and I was going to start working out with the team that spring," DeShambo said. "Then COVID happened and I was in a state of uncertainty for about a year. But when the roster had finalized for the (2021) season, I had cemented my spot."

DeShambo admitted that joining such a prestigious program was a bit nerve-racking at first.

"It can be very intimidating with the reputation that the offensive line has," DeShambo said. "Whitewater has a strong reputation on the offensive so it also



St. Mary Catholic alum Addison DeShambo has become a stalwart on the offensive line for Division III powerhouse UW-Whitewater.

comes with an honor because you are a part of that. To have worked your ass off and say that I stand in the starting five is nothing to sneeze at."

DeShambo played in nine games his first season on the roster as UW-Whitewater won a WIAC championship and advanced to the NCAA Division III semifinals. Then, last year, he became a starter at tackle on the offensive line and held the position all season.

The 6-foot-7, 356-pounder had started the first three games this season until a slight knee injury against Mary Hardin-Baylor forced him to miss the Warhawks visit to UW Oshkosh. He attended the game and was on the sidelines, but wished he was somewhere else.

"It is just torture to stand on the sideline for a game like this. Oshkosh is a very formidable team and I would love to test my skills against them alongside the rest

of the linemen," DeShambo said after the game. "It isn't preferable to stand on the sideline whatsoever. I'm lucky to have such a supporting group of family and friends because they did come anyway."

DeShambo played in a reserve role for the Warhawks last Saturday and could regain his starting role moving forward as the Warhawks again look to vie for a national title.

"That's always the end goal. Our main goal is to be the best team we can be and play to our own standards," DeShambo said. "Make sure to win the conference, those are the goals that are right in front of us. It's always about going as far as you can and being the best team possible."

DeShambo, who is an environmental science major, said he is unsure about a future in football but knows there may be opportunities out there.

Even if he doesn't keep donning the helmet and pads, he knows his time at Whitewater – and the degree he will get – will be worth it.

"Whitewater was always my first choice out of high school," said DeShambo, who started as a physics major. "It's been really nice to work in the science department, which is what I love, and play on an amazing football team."

He also looks back at his time at St. Mary Catholic – when it was St. Mary Central – fondly as he said it gave him the opportunity to pursue all of his passions and gain a wide range of experiences.

"The opportunities available to me at St. Mary Central were amazing. I was able to be involved in so many things," DeShambo said. "I was a three-sport athlete almost all four years, I did theater, I was in choir and in Spanish Club. There were so many things I was able to do that I feel like at a bigger school, you wouldn't be able to be involved in all of that. I'm really grateful to be well rounded academically and athletically, and I feel it was a nice place get a taste of everything."

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# Prep roundup

FROM PAGE 11

Bottensek, Bauman, Stamm and Mulroy winning the 200-yard medley relay, Bottensek, Cortina, Lima and Mulroy taking first in the 200-yard freestyle relay, and Bauman, Stamm, Lima and Cortina collecting the win in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

On Saturday, Neenah won the nine-team Oshkosh West Invitational.

Bauman won a pair of events at the invitational, placing first in both the 25-yard freestyle and 50-yard freestyle to lead the Rockets. Neenah also had a strong finish in the 50-yard backstroke with Bottensek, Cortina and Lima taking second, third and fourth, respectively.

Neenah also fared well in diving with Hansman taking third, Pirwitz finishing fourth and Slabbert coming in fifth.

Other top finishes for Neenah were: Cortina, third in the 100-yard freestyle; Mulroy third in the 50-yard freestyle and fourth in the 50-yard butterfly; Mia Lerner, fifth in the 25-yard freestyle; and Bottensek, fifth in the 100-yard individual medley.

Neenah also won the 100-yard freestyle relay and 200-yard freestyle relay.

## BOYS VOLLEYBALL

### Neenah win close match with Terrors

The Rockets edged Appleton West in the first two sets and went on to claim a sweep of Appleton West 26-24, 25-22, 25-19 on Tuesday.

Miles Weaver and Julian Kuehn each finished with 10 kills to lead the Rockets, while Ben Donaldson added six. Weaver also finished with seven aces and 15 digs in the win.

Jackson Dennis racked up a whopping 32 assists in the match. Dennis and Malachi Vang each picked up eight digs for the Rockets, while Gabe Theisen added seven.

## GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

### Zephyrs roll to victory over Lourdes Knights

St. Mary Catholic collected a sweep of Lourdes Academy in a nonconference match Tuesday.

The Zephyrs won the match 25-18, 25-19, 25-18 behind 12 assists and eight aces

from Stella Virlee and 14 kills and 11 digs from Lauren Fischer.

Over the weekend, St. Mary Catholic placed second at the Big East Tournament, going 2-1 on the day. The Zephyrs beat Sheboygan Lutheran (25-16, 25-14, 25-15) and Manitowoc Lutheran (25-11, 25-22, 25-10), but fell in the championship match to Howards Grove (25-16, 19-25, 25-14, 25-13).

Fischer finished with 29 kills and 29 digs to lead the Zephyrs, while Eliana Bren added 13 kills and 14 digs. Sammie Weiss chipped in 39 assists and Virlee finished with 33 assists.

## SOCCER

### Big second half boosts Zephyrs

St. Mary Catholic scored four goals in the second half to collect a 4-0 win over Cedar Grove-Belgium last week.

Kieran Barrientos finished with a hat trick, scoring three of the Zephyrs' four goals in the win.

Braeden Brenn also scored for St. Mary Catholic, while also picking up two assists. Barrientos and Grant Bergstrom also had assists in the win.

Hunter Schreiber finished with four saves to earn the shutout.

## Neenah notches nonconference win

Keegan Vande Hei and Owen Wise each scored as Neenah collected a win over Sussex Hamilton last week.

Wise also tallied an assist in the match, as did Alex Thayer.

Justin Gallmeier made 10 saves in goal to earn the shutout.

## CROSS COUNTRY

### Zephyr girls finish third at Brillion

Lauren Ripley finished fourth and Claire Higgins was ninth to lead St. Mary Catholic to a third-place finish in the girls race at the Brillion Invitational last week.

Addison Dinka was the next finisher in 27th place for the Zephyrs, who finished behind Winneconne and Hortonville in the team standings.

The St. Mary Catholic boys finished eighth overall led by Benjamin Schoeni in 13th place and Ian Albino in 17th place.

# Prep football

FROM PAGE 10

to Appleton East, this would create a four-way tie for the crown.

The Rockets will find out their playoff opponent Saturday when the postseason brackets are released.

## Zephyrs face tough road test against Hilltoppers

St. Mary Catholic will look to cap its

## Week 9 games

### Trailways Conference

(records reflect Trailways games)

- St. Mary Catholic (1-5) at Camb.-Friesland (3-3)
- Johnson Creek (6-0) at Pardeeville (2-4)
- Lourdes Academy (5-1) at Randolph (5-1)
- Fall River/Rio (1-5) at Deerfield (1-5)

only season in the Trailways Conference with a win on the road against a Cambria-Friesland team that enters the game

on a roll.

The Hilltoppers have won three of their last four games, including winning the last two by a combined five points – they edged Pardeeville 24-20, in Week 7 and scored a 28-27 win over Fall River/Rio last Friday night.

Cambria-Friesland features three players who have gained more than 400 yards rushing this season led by quarterback Carter Drews, who has also thrown for 331 yards.

But the Hilltoppers defense has allowed at least 20 points in each conference game and given up more than 40 twice this year, so it could be an opportunity for the Zephyrs offense to find its stride.

St. Mary Catholic had its best offensive showing in a conference game last week in dropping a hard-fought 34-28 decision against Lourdes Academy.

Garrett Weninger threw for 152 yards and three touchdowns in the win, with Daniel Harness catching six passes for 84 yards and two scores.

The matchup with the Hilltoppers won't be the final game of the season for the Zephyrs either.

St. Mary Catholic will host Green Bay West on Friday, Oct. 20 for a 10th regular season game. Under WIAA rules, teams who are not in the playoffs can schedule a 10th game on the weekend of the first round of the playoffs.

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# Funny Flyers

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's a squirrel???

## Do they really fly?

How do some squirrels fly? They don't have wings like birds.

The flying squirrel has a flap of skin that stretches from its front legs to its hind legs. When it stretches out its legs, these skin flaps form "wings." The squirrel uses these to glide from tree to tree.

**Standards Link:** Life Science: Animals have external features that help them thrive in different kinds of places.

## Squirrel Flight Plan

Flying squirrels use their tails to change direction and even move up and down. They turn and dive like stunt pilots and even turn somersaults! Using their tails as brakes, they land feet first and sink their sharp claws into the bark of a tree.

After landing in a tree, they climb up higher in the tree and look around for the next landing.

**Standards Link:** Life Science: Adaptations in physical structure improve an animal's chance for survival.



**Climb & Spell**  
Use the letters on the acorns to make new words as you climb the trees.

IG	C NE	AME
D G	CA E	AME
OG	AGE	TA E
LOG	PAGE	TAKE



## High-Flying Facts

Use the code to learn some amazing facts about the flying squirrel.

Flying squirrels can glide as far as 2,000 feet (600 meters).

Flying squirrels live in the forests of Asia, Europe and North America. Most of them grow to be 10 to 12 inches long (25-30 centimeters).

Some Asian flying squirrels grow to be more than 1 foot long (30 cm)!

### SECRET CODE:



**Standards Link:** Word Analysis/Phonemic Awareness: Distinguish sounds in words.

How many leaves can you count on this page?

## Mom Saves the Day!

One day, when a squirrel came back to the cozy hole in the oak tree where her little babies were, she saw a frightening sight. A lumberjack was in the tree, a limb off. In horror, she watched him pull

her four hairless babies from the nest. She knew she would have to act fast!

Not a moment, she climbed the tree, then up the man's pant leg and grasped one of her babies in her mouth.

She then higher and sailed with her baby 86 feet across the river. She the baby up to a hole in another tree. She did this again and again until all of her babies were safe.



sawing carried wasting climbing sleeping mother

Find where each word belongs in this story.

**Standards Link:** Life Science: Describe similarities and differences in the behavior of animals.

## Extra! Extra! Long Leaps!

Use the columns in the newspaper as guides to cut out long strips of paper. Measure your newspaper strips and line them up to show the number of feet (or meters) a flying squirrel can glide.

**Standards Link:** Measurement: Use standard and non-standard units to measure.

## Kid Scoop Puzzler

B S E I R N R S

G Flying Squirrel Feast I

The flying squirrels are having a feast, but which foods will they eat? Start with the letter in the square and read every other letter in the border to find out what foods flying squirrels like to munch. Then circle those foods.

I E

G E

G C

G S

E T

N S U T F U S N

**Standards Link:** Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.

## Double Double Word Search

FLYING TREE EAT AMAZING GRASPED SAILED CLIMB DIVE CLAWS HORROR SINK RIVER COUNT SKIN ACT

Find the words in the puzzle. How many of them can you find on this page?

R	O	R	R	O	H	S	K	I	N
S	U	D	E	P	S	A	R	G	S
R	E	V	I	R	G	M	S	N	A
E	Y	Z	H	N	J	T	W	I	I
E	A	T	I	G	B	C	A	Z	L
R	K	Y	V	M	D	A	L	A	E
T	L	W	I	P	S	I	C	M	D
F	Z	L	K	N	I	S	V	A	R
B	C	O	U	N	T	D	R	E	A

**Standards Link:** Letter sequencing. Recognize identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

## Proof It!

Are you an eagle-eyed reader? Read the paragraphs below and circle the seven errors you find. Then rewrite the paragraphs correctly on the lines below or a separate sheet of paper.

## Squirrel Surprise

Last Saturday, I was raking up the leafs in my backyard. Two squirrels were chasing each other from branch two branch in our tree. They raced around the trunk of the tree and onto the lawn.

My dog Jethro started running across the lawn toward the tree and barking lowdly. The too squirrels scrambled up to the highest branch of the tree.

As I went back to raking leafs, an acorn bonked poor Jethro on the head.

Did the squirrels throw that acorn? I'll never no, but they sure seemed to be giggling!

Blank lines for proofreading corrections.

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